



*Individual and Community Preparedness Division*

# Community Highlights from National Preparedness Month 2010



**FEMA**

# Background

National Preparedness Month (NPM) is an annual campaign which occurs every September encouraging Americans to be more prepared for emergencies and involved in their community. NPM began in 2004 to commemorate the events of September 11, 2001, and has since become a nation-wide effort to improve preparedness. 2010 marked the seventh time the Department of Homeland Security hosted NPM. And this year, the event was the largest.

On August 27, 2010 President Obama issued a proclamation “stress[ing] the importance of strengthening the security and resiliency of our Nation through systematic preparation for the full range of hazards threatening the United States in the 21st century, including natural disasters, cyber attacks, pandemic disease, and acts of terrorism.” The year 2010 also marked the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, one of the most tragic and destructive natural disasters in American history. In remembrance of this national tragedy, we must reaffirm our commitment to readiness and the necessity of preparedness.”

The U.S. Army, 25 states and numerous counties and cities issued similar proclamations urging individuals to take time to prepare a family emergency plan, gather emergency supplies and learn more about the types of disasters that might happen in their areas. Additionally, the U.S. House of Representatives passed Resolution # 1618, and the U.S. Senate passed Resolution # 625 proclaiming September as National Preparedness Month (NPM).

As a result to the resolutions, citizens were encouraged to become better informed and better prepared at the community level by empowering the public with information about the risks they face, and steps on how to respond to a variety of disasters and emergencies.

At the local level, Citizen Corps Councils and numerous non-governmental organizations including volunteer groups contributed to safety and security efforts by hosting and/or participating in community activities during NPM that strived to make individuals and families safer, better prepared, and more responsive during emergencies. Throughout the course of NPM, thousands of events were held around the country to help improve preparedness for hazards both natural and man-made.

This report seeks to highlight some of the events that took place at the national, regional, state, and local levels. More specifically, those events which had significant national reach or were innovative in preparing constituents at the community level. FEMA recognizes the hard work and dedication of everyone who participated and notes that the public truly is the most important part of the nation’s emergency management team. FEMA appreciates those who took the time to post events listed in the National Preparedness Month Calendar. A list of NPM events is listed in alphabetical order, by state, at the end of this document.

# Highlighting Local, Territorial, State, and FEMA Regional Efforts

FEMA acknowledges the considerable depth and breadth of regional, state and local community efforts in spreading the message about emergency preparedness during NPM 2010 and year round. Many local jurisdictions, territories, states, and FEMA Regional offices used innovative and creative ways to partner and encourage whole communities and jurisdictions to take active steps toward getting involved and becoming better prepared for disasters. This section highlights, in more detail, several events and initiatives which embodied and embraced the reaffirmation and commitment to readiness and preparedness.

FEMA's Ready Campaign and the Ad Council partnered to host a calendar of events and registry of National Preparedness Month 2010 Coalition members. The Coalition was made up of representatives from private and non-profit organizations, government entities, education institutions and businesses. This year the coalition membership increased by more than 50% compared to last year's 3,200 NPM Coalition members. The Coalition grew to 4,861 members in 2010 showing highest level of participation from organizations ever. The list of NPM Coalition Members is broken down by state and FEMA Region, and it is available at the end of this document.

The following "spotlight stories" represent just a sampling of great local efforts in greater detail. Highlighting the amazing NPM initiatives from across the country not only recognizes the dedication of organizations but demonstrates the integration of whole community principles in nationwide readiness efforts.

1. FEMA Region II, NY - Multi-Cultural Focused, Audition to be in Public Service Announcement (PSA) & Facebook Meeting Place Application
2. FEMA Region III, PA - Legislative and Community Focused, Pet Emergency Awareness
3. FEMA Region VI, TX - Youth Focused, "Know What 2 Do Campaign" A Youth Mascot Contest
4. FEMA Region VIII, ND - Rural Community Focused, Social Media Campaign
5. FEMA Region IX, Guam - Youth Focused, "Plan Now. Work Together. Be Ready"
6. FEMA Region IX, American Samoa – Multiple Rural Community Focused Efforts



**The New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and the AD Council** launched NPM by inviting New Yorkers to audition for a television PSA at Brooklyn Borough Hall. OEM and NYC TV set up a video booth at preparedness fair and encouraged passersby to share their thoughts about emergency preparedness on camera. Footage from the shoot was used to create a series of local PSAs, featured online later during National Preparedness month on OEM's website and YouTube page, and later also in taxi cabs and on TV. Additionally, in celebration of NPM, OEM and the Ad Council launched a new Facebook application to help New Yorkers find a safe place to meet their families or friends during an emergency. The new application is located on OEM's Facebook page, and serves as an interactive web mapping tool that allows New Yorkers to select a meeting place from thousands of locations in the metropolitan area in advance of an emergency. Users can search for meeting places closest to their home or office addresses or one that is conveniently located between two addresses, such as schools, museums, libraries, senior centers,

courthouses, post offices, or police or fire stations. After the meeting place is chosen, it can be shared via e-mail or text messaging. These two spotlighted activities are just a small sampling of the many events and activities that came out of New York City during NPM. Below are links or materials from the above activities.

- [Kick Off With a Call to Audition for TV PSA & Ad Council NY Ready PSA Samples](#)
- [Facebook Meeting Place Application](#)
- [I'm Ready New York, Are You? Video](#)
- [English](#), [Chinese](#) & [Spanish](#) NPM Promotional Fliers
- NPM [Event Planning Sheet](#)

[Week 1: National Preparedness Month Kick-Off](#)

[Week 2: Get a Kit: Gather Emergency Supplies](#)

[Week 3: Make a Plan: Pick a Meeting Place](#)

[Week 4: Stay Informed](#)

[Week 5: Get Involved](#)

**How to Replicate this Event:** Consider including partners in media on a Citizen Corps Council and ask them to feature Council-sponsored activities during the year. Social media tools are an easy way to get messages out and just happen to be free! Also consider creating profiles or pages for a preparedness organization. Note: Using the public in PSA's is a great strategy; however active participants will have to sign a release form in order to receive on-air approval. These forms are easy to create and/or access but consultation with legal counsel regarding consent forms and privacy issues is recommended.

**Mission:** OEM plans and prepares for emergencies, educates the public about preparedness, coordinates emergency response and recovery, and collects and disseminates emergency information.

**Community Collaboration:** The Brooklyn Borough Hall event included the NYC Citizen Corps Council (NYC CCC), and many volunteers who distributed preparedness materials and hand sanitizer to the public. Additionally, with five NPM Kick-Off events, the NYC CCC managed the recruitment, scheduling, and communications with more than 170 volunteers from the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Staten Island, and Queens NYC CCC organizations. NPM volunteers represented several organizations, largely from the American Red Cross in Greater New York, CERT, OEM, MRC, and Tzu Chi.

**New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM)**

165 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Public Inquiries in NYC: 311, Public Inquiries outside NYC: 212-639-9675



**The Pennsylvania State Animal Response Team (SART)** leveraged NPM to host a public and legislative pet preparedness education day in the East Rotunda of the Nation's Capitol in Washington, D.C. The effort coincided with a resolution from the House of Representatives declaring the last week in September "Animals in Disaster Week." SART Volunteers staffed a table display to provide educational materials and information to the public as noted directly below.

- Animal Disease Preparedness Week for Pennsylvania was the week of 9/26 – 10/3
- [Video - September is Animal Preparedness Month](#)
- [PA House Resolution 947 legislation](#) (passed 9/27)
- [Animal Emergency Resources online](#)

**How to Replicate this Event:** Work with state or local legislative authorities to help recognize and promote preparedness activities. For pursuing partnerships with organizations involved in animal safety, work with the Humane Society in your state and other groups like those listed below who may be interested in co-promoting animal preparedness:

- Fish & Game
- Livestock Association/Group(s)
- Farm Bureau Chapter
- Horsemen's Association
- Kennel Club
- USDA affiliated groups
- Other Humane Groups/Animal Control Department(s)
- Boarding Kennels
- Boarding Stables
- Fairgrounds/Rodeo Grounds

**Mission:** The Pennsylvania State Animal Response Team's mission is to develop and implement procedures and train participants to facilitate a safe, environmentally sound and efficient response to animal emergencies on the local, county, state, and federal level.

**Community Collaboration:** The Pennsylvania State Animal Response Team is a coordinated effort between several governmental, corporate, and private entities dedicated to the preparation, planning, response, and recovery of animal emergencies in Pennsylvania.

#### **Pennsylvania State Animal Response Team**

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The Pennsylvania SART is a private, 501(c) (3) not-for-profit corporation





**KnoWhat2Do**, a [North Central Texas Council of Governments](#)-sponsored preparedness program for youth, participated in many of local activities during NPM. KnoWhat2Do began the month with a contest to develop a new KnoWhat2Do mascot! KnoWhat2Do asked students to help create a mascot for their disaster preparedness campaign. Ages ranged from first graders to seniors in high school. Local Meteorologists Colleen Coyle from WFAA, Evan Andrews from Fox 4, Krista Villarreal from KRLD and Garry Seith of CBS11-TXA 21 joined KnoWhat2Do in the character contest kick-off event. The contest winner, fourth grader Kelby Woods from Red Oak, won \$500 for his winning entry, the Ant-E-Nator. Kelby's creation is slated to become a [familiar face for preparedness](#) in

North Central Texas. Their efforts included some of the following noted directly below.

- KnoWhat2Do Character & Mascot Contest (highlighting the [finalists](#))
- KnoWhat2Do [Kids' Internet page](#) with activities, games and coloring pages
- NPM [English](#) & [Spanish](#) Internet [pages](#) with Think, Prepare, Act resource sections
- Preparedness [DVD & Guide](#) for the 16 county North Central Texas area

**How to Replicate this Event:** Creating interactive activities for youth such as games and contests allows them to have fun while they are learning. Engaging youth in preparedness is important and a critical piece of the strategy for influencing behavior change. Working with schools during NPM is a great way to sustain a partnership with schools and if they aren't already, schools districts and/or school administrators should be a part of a Citizen Corps Council. [FEMA's Ready Kids](#) has great ideas for parents and teachers wanting to create an opportunity for discussion with youth about emergency preparedness.

**Mission:** Enhance lasting partnerships and proactive Emergency Preparedness initiatives through advocacy, communication, and collaboration.

**Community Collaboration:** In addition to the kids component of KnoWhat2Do participating in NPM activities; the program partnered with neighboring jurisdictions to educate and encourage the citizens of North Central Texas during the month of September. Some activities included the City of Grapevine GrapeFest, City of Lewisville Western Days, University of North Texas Emergency Preparedness Fair, Baylor Hospital, University of Texas at Dallas Preparedness Fair, Lockheed Martin's Preparedness Fair, City of Mesquite Preparedness at the Park, and a host of others. KnoWhat2Do is designed so the 16 county partners can use the same materials to ensure that standard information and one message is communicated to the residents of North Texas. The objective is to work together to disseminate public safety and preparedness tips and messages to the region.

### **North Central Texas Council of Governments**

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North Central Texas Council of Governments

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**Burleigh County** is a rural community in North Dakota. According to the Census Bureau definitions, rural communities are comprised of large and isolated areas of an open country with low population densities having fewer than 500 persons per square mile. Burleigh County has a very dispersed population across 1,633 square miles, with only 49 people per square mile. As a result, it is doubly difficult to perform education, awareness and outreach to very disperse rural citizens. Burleigh County's Emergency Management leveraged the use of technology and launched their "Are You Ready?" campaign using social media and their established [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) channels. Burleigh County leveraged National Preparedness Month with daily "Are You Ready?" social media messages to encourage residents to prepare for emergencies. An advance post on August 31st, stated, "Are you ready? Tomorrow starts the first day of the annual National Preparedness Month (NPM)." Burleigh County's "Are You Ready?" campaign provided daily tips locally,

215 people indicated on Facebook that they liked the rural county's social media preparedness posts with a gleeful response from one citizen, "I am prepared!" Key to their efforts were a continuous stream of messages and URL links leading subscribers to a variety of external resources focusing on youth, families, health, mental health, communications, the elderly, pets, tribal emergency support, and training to name just a few. The County's Facebook page and social media messages leveraged some of the best of what is on the Internet, all in one location as noted in part below:

- Posts linking to Ready.gov encouraging citizens to Get a Kit, Make a Plan, and Be Informed
- Encouraging citizens to Get Involved with the [North Dakota Citizen Corps](#)
- Teaching children how and when to call 9-1-1 for help ([eHow.com](#))
- A post from the [Sesame Workshop about Emergencies from Let's Get Ready-Parents-Sesame Street](#)
- A post for Emergency Services for County/Tribal Emergency Management
- A post on Burleigh County's outdoor warning system (sirens) criteria utilized for real events, and encouraging citizens to hear what the sirens sounds like on [their website](#)
- [A Ready.gov post for People with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs](#)

**How to Replicate This Event:** This was a significant accomplishment due to frequent logistical challenges faced by reaching dispersed rural communities. This is the second year that Burleigh County Emergency Management posted tips for NPM using social media, in trying connect to all their rural dispersed citizens. The 2010 campaign grew and became was dual driven to include Emmons County Emergency Management. Another rural community, Emmons County is the County Seat for the City of Linton with a widely dispersed population of 3,398 across 1,510 square miles. And, they used [Facebook](#) to begin to connect to their citizens as well.

**Mission:** Ensure efficient and professional emergency management service for the citizens of Burleigh County.

**Community Collaboration:** The ND Citizen Corps Council often "shares" Burleigh County Emergency Management's posts—increasing coverage. Numerous counties and other agencies have become more aware of the outreach that can be provided through social media which prompted them to create their own "page" with Burleigh County's assistance.

**Burleigh County Emergency Management**

Mary H. Senger, Emergency Manager

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**Website:** <http://burleighco.com/departments/em>



**The Guam Homeland Security – Office of Civil Defense** along with its local, federal, private and military stakeholders leveraged NPM to host a month-long series of events culminating in a Grand Finale on September 25, 2010. One focus of activities was engaging youth in emergency preparedness. Youth engagement covered a broad range of activities which included a poster contest, public safety facility tours for students, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) activities involving youth, and public education seminars targeting both youth and adults. Other activities included numerous PSA's, first responder technical trainings & exercises, and fundraising efforts to support non-governmental partners. Efforts are described in more detail directly below.

**Poster Contest:** Elementary and middle school students throughout the island took part in a poster contest, based on this year's theme: "PLAN NOW. WORK TOGETHER. BE READY." Awards were announced during the Annual NPM Grand Finale event held at Agana Shopping Center in downtown Agana, Guam.

**PÅ'GO. FANDANÑA'MACHO'CHO'. NA'LISTO HAO.**

**Chamorro Translation of Guam 2010 National Preparedness Month theme:**

**"Plan Now. Work Together. Be Ready."**

**CERT Rodeo:** Many youth participated in the 2nd Annual CERT Rodeo, allowing all those who have completed the CERT program to compete in teams, demonstrating the life-saving and team-building skills they've learned in CERT training. Guam introduced Campus CERT training to over 350 Guam Department of Education support staff.

- [National Preparedness Month Proclamation Signing](#) (9/10)
- [National Preparedness Month Grand Finale](#) (9/25)
- [Video – CERT Rodeo Competition](#)

**First Responder Wave:** To kick off Guam's participation in NPM, first responders island-wide gathered at a busy downtown intersection to wave at passersby and solicit donations from the public. Participating were members of the Guam Police and Fire Departments, Guam National Guard, Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services, Customs, and U. S. Coast Guard. Collectively, over \$1700 was raised and donated to the Guam Chapter of the American Red Cross.

**Guam Homeland Security, Office of Civil Defense**

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**The American Samoa Department of Homeland Security (ASDHS)** opened NPM activities with events reaching individuals across its many islands in “Advocating for Inclusion in Emergency Planning” Events included village evacuation drills, a preparedness expo, deployment of a public affairs team to Manu’a and a walk for preparedness. One of the most successful activities that ASDHS sponsored were the tsunami evacuation drills across three villages. American Samoa is the southernmost territory of the United States comprised of a series of islands, the largest and most populous island is Tutuila, with the Manu’a Islands, Rose Atoll, and Swains Island also included. The evacuation drills were collaborative in so far as ASDHS partnered with many organizations to make the drills successful including local stakeholder partners: the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Education, the Department of Human and Social Services, and the Office of Samoan Affairs. Engaging village mayors also contributed to the success of these village level emergency drills. An Exposition was also held at the government Executive Office Building atrium. Both government agencies and non-profit organizations used the 2010 NPM EXPO to showcase and promote disaster preparedness from their respective operations.

A deployment cadre comprised of 10 members including representatives from the Office of Public Information (KVZK), the National Park Service (NPS), NOAA, and ASDHS to the Manu’a Islands group (consisting of three main islands: Ta’u, Ofu and Olosega, 70 miles east of Tutuila). Activities conducted in Manu’a covered earthquake and tsunami public awareness, development and construction of evacuation routes, and development of updated emergency operation plans. This is a significant accomplishment due to frequent logistical challenges and limited resources faced by government agencies and citizens residing in Manu’a. The entire population of American Samoa is estimated at about 66,432 people, 95% of whom live on the largest island, Tutuila with the remaining 5% of the population living on other islands.

A “walk for preparedness and wellness” was organized whereby the general public was invited to participate including youth groups, government agencies and non-profit organizations. All participants gathered at the end of the walk for a 30-minute low impact Zumba dance exercise session and were issued t-shirts and tote bags printed with the NPM logo, courtesy of the ASDHS.

**How to Replicate This Event:** U.S. water-bound Territories face unique hazards and challenges with evacuation depending on location and proximity to other Territories or countries that can assist during and after disasters. Awareness of hazards and additional public education through drills and training efforts increases the ability of individuals to take care of themselves and their family members. NPM should also encourage organizations and individuals to participate in planning and preparedness activities through year-round engagement. Consider promoting events leading up to NPM in order to keep momentum going through the month of September. Target and work with communities that have not traditionally participated in NPM activities and coordinate with leaders of the those communities to continue educating their members.

**Mission:** Coordinate, consolidate and collaborate the efforts of its component agencies into a cogent whole that supports the overall purposes of all hazard preparedness, response, detection, deterrence, prevention and enforcement.

**Community Collaboration:** Some of the participating agencies and organizations included the Department of Public Safety’s Fire division, the American Samoa Community College’s University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) and Land Grant extension program, Office of Samoan Affairs, Office of Protection and Advocacy for the Disabled (OPAD), the American Samoa Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (ASVOAD), Pualele Foundation, and the American Samoa Department of Homeland Security.

**American Samoa Department of Homeland Security (ASDHS)**

Director, Michael R. Sala

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# Other Highlights of Local Activities Include:

**Alabama Ready Camp:** Alabama's Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (GFBCI) and the Alabama Department of Homeland Security (AL DHS) conducted its fifth annual Be Ready Camp. This camp provided an opportunity for about one hundred eighty sixth-graders across Alabama to become Youth Preparedness Delegates and carry the message of preparedness and safety to their schools, communities, and families. This camp has been featured in international Homeland Security journals and received national media attention, including coverage from the Cable News Network (CNN). Additionally, the camp is considered a best practice by the White House and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. For information visit the link at <http://bereadycamp.org>.

**Disaster Ready Challenge:** ReadyColorado hosted the Disaster Ready Challenge, And, this was an opportunity for citizens to test their Disaster Ready IQ in a fun interactive learning format. A partnership with the local CBS Affiliate was created to show advertisements with popular news anchors encouraging residents of Colorado to be better prepared. For information visit the link at [www.readycolorado.com/disasterreadychallenge.php](http://www.readycolorado.com/disasterreadychallenge.php).

**Amtrak California:** Throughout California, Amtrak developed its first-time National Preparedness Month initiative that included wide-range distribution of Ready materials with highest praise from public for Pet and Elderly information. Posters and personal preparedness materials were strategically placed on Amtrak's two main trunk lines to Seattle and Chicago and on primary commuter routes.

**New Jersey:** New Jersey introduced and began the credentialing of private sector essential employees whose services are considered essential in support of state-wide response efforts. For more information visit the following URL at [www.state.nj.us/njoem/pdf/101510\\_essentialempreg.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/njoem/pdf/101510_essentialempreg.pdf).

**Sports Venues:** A number of states, counties, and cities partnered with local sports teams and stadiums to broadcast preparedness messages to thousands of audience members. These included:

1. **Aberdeen** Ironbirds Minor League Baseball Team (Sponsored by the Harford County Citizens Corp Council)
2. **Arkansas** Preparedness Days at Travelers baseball game and at the War Memorial Stadium Arkansas Razorback Game
3. **FEMA Region X** distributed preparedness information to fans at the Seattle Mariners-Cleveland Indians baseball game
4. **Philadelphia's** Office of Emergency Management disseminated preparedness materials at a Phillies baseball game.
5. **West Virginia's** First Lady Gayle Manchin asked attendees to participate in an emergency preparedness text-messaging drill during the Marshall v. WVU Football game (The Coal Bowl).

FEMA's Individual and Community Preparedness Division, the Ready Campaign, and FEMA staff members were engaged in many National Preparedness Month 2010 activities. The activities were focused on supporting local initiatives and raising awareness and participation of the general public in preparedness activities, promoting good practices, and highlighting efforts at the local, state, and regional levels. Some of the major activities organized by FEMA and its partners during NPM 2010 included:

**NPM Coalition:** Ready.gov partnered with the Ad Council to facilitate the hosting of the NPM Coalition List. The NPM Coalition lists all organizations who took part in preparedness activities during NPM. The list is available at: <http://www.ready.gov/america/npm10/index.html>.

**Commander Ready Kickoff:** FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate launched NPM in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the D.C. Office of Homeland Security and the Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) and Serve DC, from the Mayor's Office on Volunteerism by including youth in a range of preparedness seminars and activities. D.C.'s Commander Ready program teaches emergency preparedness skills to elementary school children. For more information go to the following URL at: <http://newsroom.dc.gov/show.aspx/agency/dcema/section/2/release/20404/year/2010>.

**National Summit on Youth Preparedness:** FEMA, the Department of Education, and the American Red Cross hosted a highly successful National Summit on Youth Preparedness with more than 180 in-person and 180 Internet participants. The findings from the Summit will help FEMA develop a strategy on youth preparedness and take steps to help better prepare youth, and find ways for youth to become more involved in community preparedness.

**National Citizen Corps Achievement Awards:** FEMA recognized nine Citizen Corps Councils and three outstanding individuals for the National Citizen Corps Achievement Awards. The award winners engaged in a two-hour long discussion on community preparedness with Administrator Fugate, and met with federal stakeholders to discuss their accomplishments and provide feedback.

**Community Preparedness Webinars During National Preparedness Month:** Four webinars were hosted on preparedness topics including:

1. National Summit on Youth Preparedness (webinar broadcast)
2. Resources for Business Preparedness
3. Suspicious Activity Reporting: Stopping the Threat
4. Citizen Corps National Preparedness Month Kickoff

Each webinar had hundreds of viewers of the live and [archived versions](#), and the audience's feedback was almost unanimously positive.

**Ready Responder:** During NPM 2010, FEMA's Ready Campaign released the Responder Ready initiative. Responder Ready focuses on ensuring that the families of America's first responders are prepared in the event one or more of their family members is responding to a major emergency or disaster. For more information visit the following URL at: <http://www.ready.gov/america/getakit/responder.html>.

**Outreach to the Spanish-Speaking Communities:** FEMA reached out to the Spanish-speaking community by having representatives make appearances on Univision and CNN en Espanola. Additionally, FEMA released new Listo.gov PSAs during the Los Angeles Preparedness Fair. For more information visit the following URL at: <http://www.adcouncil.org/newsDetail.aspx?id=351>.